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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus for service level recognition and registration processing in a wireless communication device are provided. According to one aspect of the present invention, a method is provided for transitioning between service modes and indicating a current service mode to a user of a wireless communication device. The status of a signal associated with a forward channel from a messaging system to the wireless communication device is determined. A quality metric is determined based upon the status over a predetermined period of time. Three service modes, including a full service mode, a basic service mode, and a storing service mode are provided. In the storing service mode, after determining the quality metric is better than a first predetermined threshold a transition is made to the basic service mode. In the basic service mode, after verification of a reverse channel from the wireless communication device to the messaging system a transition is made to the full service mode. In the full service mode if the reverse channel becomes degraded, then a transition is made to the basic service mode. The current service mode is indicated to the user. According to another aspect of the present invention, a wireless communication device performs registration processing based upon the current service mode of the wireless communication device. Three service modes are recognized, including: a storing service mode in which new messages destined for the wireless communication device are not received by the wireless communication device; a basic service mode in which new messages destined for the wireless communication device are received by the wireless communication device, and a full service mode in which both new messages and stored messages are received by the wireless communication device. A registration process determines what action to take based upon the current service mode.